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Published to advance the Science of cold-blooded vertebrates

THE "FAT-PRIEST FISH" IN CALIFORNIA.

This morning my son brought in from the market a few steaks sliced from the side of a very large fish, which had never come into our markets before.

The flavor is rich and delicate, a little fat, but the oil without the strong flavor seen in mackerels and sardines. It is in fact very much like that of the Skil-fish, (*Anoplopoma fimbria*), which is now being largely pushed under the name of "Sablefish" and is, by the way, both fresh and smoked a real addition to our food-supplies. This fish is in fact the nearest relative to the one now under discussion, *Erilepis zonifer*, and the two species constitute the family of Anoplomidæ.

The fish in question was first noticed in 1879, a small specimen a foot long from Monterey in the Museum of the California Academy of Sciences was described by W. N. Lockington, then a curator, as *Myriolepis zonifer*. The fish was covered with myriads of small scales, head, fins, everywhere, hence "*Myriolepis*," and the greenish body was crossed by black cross-bars. The name *Myriolepis* had been already used for a fossil fish and Dr. Gill later substituted *Erilepis*, of similar meaning.

The fish was not seen again until 1900, when Jordan and Snyder found a huge stuffed specimen in the Imperial Museum of Tokyo. It was six feet

long, and looked like a giant bass. It was said to be rare in Japan and to be called "Aburabodzu" or "Fat-Priest." Not suspecting any relation to *Erilepis*, we called it a new genus, *Ebisus sagamius*. Later, a small example taken by Dr. Hugh M. Smith in Southern Japan suggested the resemblance to *Erilepis*.

Through the efforts of Dr. Mitsukuri, I secured later a fresh example of the Fat-Priest, which I had figured. This left no doubt of the identity of *Ebisus* with *Erilepis*, although the black bands fade with age.

Lately Mr. W. F. Thompson has obtained two or three moderate sized specimens in Alaska. These are all known to science until the species appeared on my table in Palo Alto. I find another in the market today.

It will probably be found in abundance on rocky shallows in the North Pacific. If so, it will prove one of our best food-fishes, ranking with the Halibut, and the California Sea Bass, which by the way is no bass at all, *Atractoscion nobilis*, a relative of the Eastern Weak-fish. The fishermen call the Priest-Fish "Deep-water Cod."

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A LIST OF REPTILES FROM JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA.¹

The following reptiles were seen or caught between four and ten miles south of Jacksonville, from August 15, 1911, to August 13, 1912:

Chelonia.

1. *Chelydra serpentina*, common in all waters.
2. *Kinosternon odoratum*, common in brooks.
3. *Kinosternon bauri*, one specimen on bank of brook.

¹ Nomenclature changed to correspond with Stejneger & Barbour, Check list, 1917.—*Ed.*